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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1938
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RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 0825
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA 0373
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TAGS: PGOV PREL KPKO MARR FR SO UG BY

SUBJECT: AMISOM/SOMALIA: FRANCE TRAINING UGANDAN MILITARY
FOR AMISOM DEPLOYMENT

REF: STATE 24665

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor William Jordan, 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: France is in the process of training a Ugandan military unit in Uganda for eventual deployment to AMISOM in Somalia. This is the fifth training operation of this nature the French have conducted; the four previous ones involved Uganda (three units) and Burundi (one unit). The French are concerned about the elaborate budget the UN Department of Field Support (UNDFS) has put together for the UN's assistance to AMISOM and fear that UNDFS has gotten ahead of itself and may be planning for a UN mission to replace AMISOM, which France would not favor. END SUMMARY.

French Training for AMISOM

¶2. (C) In response to reftel, French MFA Somalia desk officer Thierry Caboche said on March 19 that France was training a unit of Ugandan military for service in AMISOM. Forty French trainers were conducting the training in Uganda. (Caboche clarified on March 20 that this training had already begun but he did not know where specifically in Uganda it was taking place.) The present training program followed four previous French training operations in connection with AMISOM, three of which involved Ugandans, with the fourth involving Burundian troops. The units trained by the French consisted of between 600 and 800 troops each. Caboche said that no other training programs were being planned, but he did not rule out the possibility of additional training down the road and that such training might be carried out in Djibouti. The GOF was considering Djibouti as a possible training site for other units to join AMISOM but had reached no conclusion. Djiboutians, he reported, seemed receptive to the possibility. Caboche remarked that the GOF had not done an internal cost analysis of all of AMISOM-related training as it had not yet been placed in a budget category at the MOD. Caboche said that the GOF was preparing an update of statistics associated with the training programs and that he would provide a copy once

one is available.

UN Assistance to AMISOM

¶3. (C) Caboche took the opportunity to comment on France's concerns about the UN Department of Field Support (UNDFS) and what he described as its very extravagant plan and budget for the logistical and other support the UN is supposed to provide to AMISOM. Echoing what other GOF officials had stated previously, Caboche said that the UN plan would be appropriate, perhaps, for a "gold-plated, full-scale" UN PKO but seemed excessive in the AU/AMISOM context. The UN plan called for opening several new support offices involving perhaps 250 new personnel, which, he commented, seemed by any measure excessive. Equally worrisome, Caboche noted, was the tone of the reports and plans UNDFS was submitting to the UN.

According to Caboche, they were all written as if current planning contemplated an eventual UN successor mission to AMISOM. Expressing a longstanding French view, Caboche repeated that France did not favor a new UN PKO to replace AMISOM in Somalia, and he said that UNDFS should focus on doing what is necessary to support AMISOM and not devote its energies, as it seemed to be doing, to laying the groundwork for a UN PKO in Somalia.

PEKALA